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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Daniel Mercola et al :
Application No. 10/032,260 : DECISION ON PETITION
Filed: December 20, 2001 : UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)
Attorney Docket No. ADA.001CIP1 :

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed March 4, 2005, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of priority to prior-filed nonprovisional Application No. 09/270,391, filed March 16, 1999, as set forth in the amendment filed concurrently with the instant petition.

The petition is GRANTED.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The instant nonprovisional application was filed after November 29, 2000, and the claim herein for the benefit of priority to the

above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application is submitted after expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). Therefore, this is a proper petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3).

37 CFR § 1.78(a)(3) requires a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR § 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. Since the statement contained in the instant petition varies from the language required by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), the statement contained in the instant petition is being construed as the statement required by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3).

The petition complies with the requirements for a grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) in that (1) a reference to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application has been included in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification following the title, as provided by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(iii); (2) the surcharge fee required by 37 CFR 1.17(t) has been submitted; and (3) the petition contains an adequate statement of unintentional delay. Accordingly, having found that the instant petition for acceptance of an unintentionally delayed claim for the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application satisfies the conditions of 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), the petition is granted.

The granting of the petition to accept the delayed benefit claim to the prior-filed application under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) should not be construed as meaning that the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application. In order for the instant application to be entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application, all other requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(1) and (a)(2) must be met. Similarly, the fact that the corrected Filing Receipt accompanying this decision on petition includes the prior-filed application should not be construed as meaning that applicant is entitled to the claim for benefit of priority to the prior-filed application noted thereon. Accordingly, the examiner will, in due course, consider this benefit claim and determine whether the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing date.

A corrected Filing Receipt, which includes the priority claim to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application, accompanies this decision on petition.

Any inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3218. All other inquiries concerning either the examination procedures or status of the application should be directed to the Technology Center.

This matter is being referred to Technology Center Art Unit 1634 for appropriate action on the amendment filed March 4, 2005, including consideration by the examiner of applicant's entitlement to claim benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application.



Frances Hicks
Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions
Office of the Deputy Commissioner
for Patent Examination Policy

ATTACHMENT: Corrected Filing Receipt